

Volunteer Recruitment

Taking stock and picking up some tips

Department of Family and Community Services



Definition of a volunteer

*‘Volunteering is time willingly given for the common good and without financial gain’,
Volunteering Australia*

*Volunteering can be formal or informal
with an organisation, outside of an organisation
regular or infrequent and event based,
it can be direct or indirect,
face to face or online.*

Why is volunteering important?

In 2014:

- In Australia, 5.8 million people aged 15 and over volunteered, 31% of the population. Contributing 743 million hours.
- Estimated \$290 billion annual contribution to the economic and social good.
- Approximately 890,000 people work in the Not For Profit sector (NFP).
- NFP sector contributes 5% to Australia's Gross Domestic Product and 8% to employment.
- Demand for volunteering services continues to rise.
- In NSW, over 2.1 million volunteers contribute \$5 billion to the NSW economy. These volunteers contribute over 240 million hours per annum.

Sources: Volunteering Australia 2017-18 Federal Pre-budget submission; 2014 General Social Survey, ABS; Productivity Commission.

Economic Contributions

- Voluntary welfare services are conservatively estimated to be worth more than double the value of services provided by all levels of government in Australia combined.
- More than half of formal volunteering promotes community wide interests, including recreation.

Source: Department of Social Services (DSS), Social Policy Research Paper 28, Exploring the economic and social value of present patterns of volunteering in Australia

Analysis includes formal and informal volunteering

Social Contributions

Common reasons for volunteering and getting involved:

- *Help others in the community (64%)*
- *Personal satisfaction (57%)*
- *Do something worthwhile (54%)*
- *Personal or family involvement (45%)*
- *Social contact (37%)*
- *To be active (35%)*

Are you are giving your volunteers the opportunity to achieve these reasons?

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), General Social Survey 2014, Summary Results, Australia

Social Contributions

Volunteers agree that volunteering:

- *Made me feel physically healthier (68%)*
- *Enriches sense of purpose (92%)*
- *Improves sense of well being (89%)*
- *Lowers stress levels (73%)*
- *Makes people happier (96%)*
- *Improves emotional health (77%)*
- *Helps recovery from loss and disappointment (78%)*

Source: The International Journal of Person Centered Medicine, Stephen Post PHD, 'It is good to be good', 2011 5th Annual Scientific Report on Health, Happiness and Helping Others.

Motivations of volunteers

Altruism

- helping others, the community and giving back

Work related

- gain new skills, work experience, use existing skills

Duty

- religious belief, felt obliged, mandated

Incidental

- a way of being active, happened to get involved

Source: DSS, Social Policy Research Paper 28, Exploring the economic and social value of present patterns of volunteering in Australia.

*Policy relevant
aspects of
volunteering*

- Volunteering supports direct government expenditure on services.
- Contribution of volunteering to the stock of social capital in communities.
- Volunteering as a pathway to economic, social and civic participation, inclusion and cohesion in communities.

Source: DSS, Social Policy Research Paper 28, Exploring the economic and social value of present patterns of volunteering in Australia.

Key considerations

- Volunteers make a strong contribution to the economy.
- Demand for volunteers is on the rise.
- The value of volunteering needs to be recognised.
- Volunteers get significant health and wellbeing benefits from their participation.
- Communities are stronger and more resilient with a good volunteer base.
- Volunteering adds to the stock of social and human capital in a community.
- Volunteering can be a path to economic, social and civic participation.

*How do we
grow
volunteering?*

We need to be:

- *Creative*
- *Innovative*
- *Flexible*
- *Diverse and inclusive*
- *Dynamic, embracing change*
- *Forward thinking*
- *Thinking outside the box*
- *Brave and bold*

Business as usual will not be enough !

Setting the scene

Self reflection and discussion: (exercise – 20 minutes)

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- Who here volunteers?
- Who here uses or needs volunteers?
- Are P&C members tired and over stretched?
- Have trouble filling volunteer roles?
- Run events, fetes, fairs, carnivals?
- How do you recruit volunteers? Word of mouth? Guilt? Newsletters? Look externally? Embrace partnerships?
- Are you inclusive and embrace diversity?
- Solely rely on parents?
- View your school as part of a wider community?
- Work with other organisations in your area?
- Have a plan?
- Are you volunteer ready?

Score yourself

What would you score yourself? (1 – 5)

- **1** = panic, anxiety, no plan, desperate need for volunteers, no external view, solely rely on parents, rely on and use guilt, lots of vacancies, hard to retain volunteers, no strategic alliances or partnerships, members are tired and frustrated, volunteers are not recognised for their contributions, rigid, fixed and not flexible. 😞
- **3** = mixed feelings, part of a plan, some need for volunteers, mixed view (internal and external, mostly internal), mostly parents, use a combination of methods to recruit, some vacancies, mix of retention and loss, limited community partners, members are at times tired and frustrated, sometimes volunteers are recognised for their contributions, some flexibility in volunteering options.
- **5** = very happy, have a plan that works, no shortage of volunteers, internal and external views, mixed recruitment methods, retaining volunteers, have strategic alliances and partners, members are energised, volunteers are recognised and valued, flexible and dynamic approach to volunteering options. 😊

Zero to hero?

How do you go from 1 to 5

or

from zero to hero?

*Volunteer
ready?*

5 top tips

- 1. Start by asking** – why do we want to involve volunteers?
 - We know that volunteers can add great value, but how do they help you achieve your mission and strategic objectives?
- 2. Commit** pen to paper and write a ‘volunteering policy and plan’.
 - This should help you think through exactly how you will involve volunteers in your school and community. Don’t forget to consult widely with staff and volunteers in developing your policy and plan.

*Volunteer
ready?*

3. **Develop** your volunteering options and opportunities – be creative and flexible.
 - Consider different types of volunteering roles, micro volunteering is one example.
 - Micro volunteering is small, one off opportunities, that may relate to an event or activity, it adds flexibility to your options.
4. **Outline** the roles clearly by preparing volunteer role descriptions to help staff and volunteers understand their roles, descriptions also help when it comes to recruitment.
5. **Who** will support and manage the volunteers? Do you have a volunteer coordinator or manager? Do you recognise the importance of this role? This can be crucial to the success of recruiting and retaining your volunteers.

Volunteer ready?

- Being volunteer ready is about **preparing** yourself, your organisation and your volunteers for a great experience, and to make sure you give yourself and the volunteers the **best chance** for success.
- **Lay the ground work** to reap the rewards of a **vibrant** and **inclusive** volunteering program.

Common Questions

1. How can I recruit volunteers?
2. Do we need a code of conduct for volunteers?
3. Where can I learn more about volunteer recruitment and management?
4. Is it possible to recruit volunteers online?

Recruitment

Consider a variety of ways, finding people is half the journey...

- *Creative ways to be flexible and inclusive*
- *Word of mouth*
- *Advertise*
- *Newsletters*
- *Strategic partnerships with other local volunteer involving organisations*
- *Collaborate and share resources to mutual benefit*
- *Volunteer Resource Centres*
- *Social media channels*
- *Local media*
- *Online recruitment platforms*

Recruitment

- Try and avoid the use of guilt.
- Carefully consider the requirements of the volunteering role, does it need a drivers licence? Police check? Working with children check? Is it location specific or can it be done remotely?
- Remember that people are offering the gift of time as a volunteer.
- Keep processes clear, forms simple and interviews informal.
- Long and complicated process can be a barrier to recruitment and retention.
- Be open and flexible, embrace diversity and be inclusive.

Recruitment

- Keep records.
- Have clear two way communication channels.
- Once you have found the right match, set out your commitment to each other in the form of a volunteer agreement.
- Complete relevant checks and references and get started with inductions.
- Ensure you have relevant insurance and WHS arrangements in place.
- Well designed roles, a good plan and good processes contribute to the organisation's goals and are always a good place to start...

Statement of Principles

Statement of Principles for the Recognition of Volunteers

- NSW Government in partnership with the Centre for Volunteering.
- Code of Conduct.
- Simple and free. Free to sign up.
- 7 principles – good communication, mutual respect and recognition.
- 436 organisations covering over 900,000 volunteers.
- Help us expand its coverage and improve volunteering.
- Go to the website and sign up...

www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au

The logo for Way2Go is presented within a red speech bubble shape. The text 'Way2Go' is written in a white, italicized, sans-serif font. The speech bubble has a tail pointing downwards and to the left.

Way2Go

Way2Go Volunteer Recruitment and Management Training and Toolkit

- Developed in partnership between NSW Government and the Albury Wodonga Volunteer Resource Bureau.
- A tool for all types of volunteer organisations.
- Toolkit and training workshops available.
- Checklists and information.
- Easily adapted to your organisation.
- Being used throughout NSW.
- 3 steps to the approach !

The logo for Way2Go is presented within a red speech bubble shape. The text "Way2Go" is written in a white, italicized, sans-serif font. The speech bubble has a tail pointing downwards and to the left.

Way2Go

3 Steps

1. **Before** volunteers are brought into the program or activity
 - Develop the program: plan, document and develop.
 - Recruitment of volunteers: advertise and recruit.
 - Interview and selection: interviewing, selection process and choice made.

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Way2Go

2. **During** the volunteers are part of the program

- Induction and orientation: induction and commence role, feel welcome.
- Supervision, support and management of volunteers: support to manage challenges, to give and receive feedback, mutual respect and inclusion.
- Training of volunteers: develop training, essential training, ongoing training.
- Maximise retention: effective process, recognition and reward, thanks, lessons learnt.

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Way2Go

3. **After** volunteers leave

- Resignation and dismissal: resignation, dismissal, exit interview
- Continuous improvement: continuous, methods of evaluation, responding to evaluation.

vrb.org.au

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Online recruitment?

How and where can I recruit volunteers online?

- NSW Government has redeveloped its volunteering website.
- Partnered with SEEK Volunteer to provide a volunteer recruitment portal on the website.
- Easy and free.
- Over 1386 organisations using the portal, 2926 volunteering opportunities (as at 27 Feb 2018).
- Organisations create a profile and post volunteering opportunities.
- People in search of opportunities can search and express interest directly with the organisation.
- New features and functionality, making it easier !

www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au

*Some further
tips...*

- Recognise the contributions made by volunteers, thanking people for their efforts goes a long way !
- You can recognise efforts by hosting a thank you event, or small everyday gestures.
- Good communication and mutual respect.
- A people centred approach .
- Value your volunteers by integrating them into the organisations, involve them in decision making or invite them to meetings and events.
- Provide on-going support and opportunities for regular communication.
- Seek and give feedback, positive and negative.
- Integrate lessons learnt.

Next steps

Next steps – the journey is up to you ...

- Learn more – Way2Go training and toolkit.
- Reflect and talk.
- Write a plan.
- Statement of Principles for the Recognition of Volunteers – sign up and make a commitment!
- Recruit via a range of channels – use the online recruitment portal.
- Implement good volunteer management.
- Recognise the contributions being made by volunteers.
- Embrace change and be brave.

Contact

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